



PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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CHEMICAL USE ON VEGETABLES TO BE MEASURED

HARRISBURG, August 26, 2010 – To gather reliable, objective information about pesticides used on vegetables, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will be surveying vegetable growers in 19 states during late 2010. Information gathered from growers nationwide will be used to set state and national estimates of producers' use of pesticides on 29 vegetable crops.

The survey gives growers an opportunity to tell how they use agricultural chemicals responsibly to produce a safe and abundant food supply for America and the world. The survey results are official USDA estimates and help clarify the facts about chemical use in agriculture. Accurate and timely information on actual usage is used in the decision-making process for the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), which has an impact on product registration, re-registration, and product alternatives.

In Pennsylvania, the Vegetable Chemical Use Survey will be conducted by the Pennsylvania field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, located in Harrisburg. The study is done in cooperation with the Pesticide Education Department of The Pennsylvania State University. This year snap bean (processing), sweet corn (fresh market), and pumpkin growers will be asked for their help with this important project in Pennsylvania. Past reports in this state have been issued for chemical usage on apples, cantaloupe, peaches, and tomatoes.

"USDA has an obligation to provide reliable data on pesticide use and this survey gives NASS the information necessary to do that," said Kevin Pautler, director of the Pennsylvania field office of NASS. Mr. Pautler also stated that without actual data from farmers, assumptions are often made that all acres are treated with maximum label rates for all chemicals allowed on each crop.

A team of field enumerators will be contacting vegetable producers between October 1 and November 30 to gather information on vegetable crops – chemicals used, acres treated, and rates applied. This year information regarding fertilizer applications and pest management practices will also be collected. Individual grower information is strictly confidential, and individual reports are combined to set state and national estimates.

NASS will publish the resulting state and national estimates of vegetable growers' use of agricultural chemicals in July 2011. The *Agricultural Chemical Usage – Vegetables* report will contain information on the percent of acres covered, rate per application, rate per crop year, and total amount applied for the states surveyed. All agricultural statistics published by NASS are available at www.nass.usda.gov. For more information, call (717) 787-3904.

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